



# The South India CHURCHMAN

The Magazine of the Church of South India

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ASIA SUNDAY 11, MAY 1986 — "FULFILLING THE SERVANT-MINISTRY OF THE CHURCH"

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*Opinions expressed by contributors do not commit the C.S.I.*

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The Magazine of the Church of South India

MAY 1986

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## 25 Years Ago!

The Gospel has been carried by the apostles  
messengers to the ends of the earth to bring men into  
the stream of the history initiated and directed by God.  
These men have come here also and among them  
friends whose names we record in the annals of our  
history. Whatever be their antecedents of race or culture  
they and we have become one in a tradition which dates  
from the creation, and is ever alive and present wherever  
the word is spoken and heard. They who spoke the  
word to us and we who responded in faith have become  
from henceforth for ever one. In Christ there is no east  
or west. To belong to this community which enshrines  
such a tradition must be our glory and pride.

— Churchman 1953

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# A Day of Spiritual Combat



Sharpeville 1960, 69 killed-Soweto 1976, over 500 killed (all children)-Langa (Uitenhage) 1985, 19 killed. (These are the 'official' statistics and therefore an underestimate). This must stop! Apartheid must be dismantled! The blacks of South Africa must have their basic rights restored to them!

On June 16th this year, Christians throughout the world will be urging these steps by prayer and fasting. Documentation and posters are being sent to the churches by the World Council of Churches (WCC) in preparation for this day.

June 16th has been declared a day of prayer and fasting throughout the world for South Africa. This decision was taken by the Executive Committee of the WCC when it met in Kinshasa from March 9th to 15th this year. In doing so, it adopted the proposal made by the 'summit' church conference held in Harare (Zimbabwe) from December 4th to 6th 1985 when the idea of making this day a World Day of Prayer and Fasting 'to end unjust rule in South Africa' was first launched.

The hundred church leaders from South Africa, Western Europe, North America, Australia, and from other regions of Africa, meeting in Harare, had boldly affirmed: 'The moment of truth (Kairos) is now, both for South Africa and for the world community.' 'In this moment of immense potentiality, we agree that the apartheid structure is against God's will and morally indefensible . . . The South African government has no credibility . . . We understand and fully support those in South Africa who are calling for the resignation of the government.'

The proposal to make June 16th 1986 a World Day of Prayer and Fasting was accompanied by

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a set of recommendations to the Churches and Christians inviting them to urge the nations of the world to prevent the extension or renewal of bank loans to the white regime, to apply immediate and comprehensive sanctions to South African and to support South African movements working for the liberation of their country.

Along the same lines, three leading South African churchmen-Desmond Tutu, Anglican Bishop of Johannesburg, Buyers Naude, General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches, and Allan Boesak, President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches-have recommended 'Northern' banks not to agree to the rescheduling of South Africa's debts to them. The three leaders declared: 'Dominated as the government by representatives of the white minority, it should be required to resign as a prior condition for the rescheduling of these debts.'

The Harare church summit meeting also called for the liberation of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners, and demanded the immediate implementation of the United Nations Resolution 435 on the independence of Namibia providing for free elections to be held in that country. In its 'Message to member Churches,' the WCC Executive Committee adopted all these recommendations of the 'Harare Declaration' and also included an invitation to the international rally of young people to be held at the beginning of June. Please pray for God's just rule.

—D. B.

exerpted from Department of Communication  
World Council of Churches.



# *'Do A New Thing, O Lord!'*

Strengthen, O Lord, those who work  
to unmask the forces of evil,  
and to breakdown a system  
rooted in injustice.

Deepen the commitment of your people  
as they struggle to dethrone the powers of  
oppression  
and establish justice in the land,

Strengthen their will, we pray, O Lord,  
that they may not be crippled by helplessness  
but go on, in your power, to the very end,  
till the cries of anguish  
are turned to shouts of joy.

Show forth your power, O Lord of the nations,  
and do a new thing among your people  
and establish justice, peace and true community.

Eternal God,  
Our hope in times of despair,  
Our life in the midst of death—

You showed your faithfulness to our ancestors  
and listened to them  
as they called upon you in their distress ;

We cry out to you today  
with the people of South Africa—

A nation in turmoil ; torn apart by violence—  
We pray for the overthrow of injustice and the  
healing of wounds.

Our hearts are heavy, our wounds are deep ;  
do not wait, O Lord, but bring your healing  
before we can no longer forgive ;  
before, consumed with hatred, we lose the  
ability to love.

When death had done its worst  
you brought your Son to new life ;

You revealed the power of your love  
and your victory over evil :

Break our bonds and set us all free  
that we may know that YOU are the Lord—

Amen  
—WCC

## *ASIA SUNDAY*

### *MAY 11, 1986*

Theme :

**Fulfilling the Servant Ministry of the Church**

Please write to the General Secretary C.S.I., for your requirements of  
Worship resources



# TRINITY

*The Doctrine of the Trinity and the gods of our Fathers: Towards the Trinitarian understanding of God within the Indian religious and cultural heritage.*

RT. REV DR. P. VICTOR PREMASAGAR  
Deputy Moderator

The doctrine of the Trinity has puzzled Christian theologians for a long-time to the extent that several of them, having given analogies to interpret this doctrine acknowledge the fact that it is a mystery and cannot be adequately explained but only experienced by the believers. In India, this doctrine has been interpreted through the concept of *Sat-chit-ananda* and several theologians have seen parallels in the *trimurthi* but no positive attempt seems to have been made to understand this doctrine within the Indian religious and cultural heritage.

The Old Testament has a plural ending in for the word God (*Elohim*). In the creation story, the pluralistic language used in the creation of man (Gen. 1, 27), 'Let us make man in our own image', has often been understood as a majestic plural. Some have suggested God speaking with his heavenly court as in the book of Job. Others have seen indications of the trinitarian concept of God in these early stories. Male and female principles could also be understood as reflected in this plural ending for God. In all these, there is an acceptance of plurality within the Godhead. The plural ending in *Elohim*, may, indeed, be the remnant of an ancient polytheistic understanding of God, later subsumed under a single deity with a plural ending. The plural ending perhaps indicates the all inclusiveness of the Godhead, whose revelation from time to time only reveals this one God in plural forms. There is much more that is not revealed and thus not known by human beings—this unknown aspect of God could also be reflected in the plural ending for God.

The Gods of the Fathers in the patriarchal narratives originally gods of different tribal chiefs—fathers of the tribes, were brought into one by the Yahwist through introducing the name Yahweh right from the creation story in Gen. 2, 4 ff. The Elohist and the Priestly writers may also have a similar intention in using the common name for God with a plural ending until the time when Yahweh revealed this name to Moses (Gen. 3:1-14;

6, 1f). The Elohist and the Priestly writers introduce the name Yahweh, after the name was revealed to Moses, the God who earlier known to the patriarchs of the different tribes as the Gods of their fathers. Albrecht Alt points out that the originally different Gods for the fathers had specific names indicated in the patriarchal narratives—the God of Abraham—perhaps as 'Shield' (*Mogen*) (Gen. 15:1), the God of Isaac as the fear (*Pehad*) of Isaac (Gen. 31, 53), and the God of Jacob as 'the mighty (*Abir*) one of Jacob' (Gen. 49, 24). These were all brought together under the one name Yahweh.

The Gods worshipped in the period of the patriarchs and Yahweh in the period of Israel's wandering in the wilderness, at the Sinai mountain and later the Canaanite deities whom they came to know during the period of the settlement, all reflect a pluralistic, polytheistic and at its best a henotheistic (*Ishtadevatharadhana*) religion in Israel. The local manifestations of God were worshipped as their tribal deities. This provided a sense of unity for that tribe and common purpose in a locality in the early centuries, but when the interests of one community clashed with those of the others, they held on to their identity through their own deity and saw the gods of other peoples as the gods of their enemies. Thus religious rivalries developed, which were in fact based on economic, social and political grounds, and had nothing to do with the gods at all.

The first commandment in the dialogue insists that Israel shall not have other gods before Yahweh (Ex. 20, 3-5) thereby conceding the existence of other gods. It was only in Deutero-Isaiah that there is the first expression of a monotheistic understanding of God, where the prophet declares that there are no gods besides Yahweh.

When Israel came into Canaan, they were drawn towards the Canaanite deities who were believed to have given fertility to land, cattle and people. Hitherto, they



had known the patriarchal deities as gods of promise and guidance. Yahweh as the God of Sinai, protecting the peoples in the desert and now the Canaanite deities of the settled peoples. Different functions were attributed to different deities, the so-called polythesism can be seen as attributing specific functions to different deities as people were obliged to please them through worship and sacrifices, to obtain their special gifts and blessings, and thus meet the diverse needs of their day to day existence. Even Islam, the strictly monotheistic religion, is obliged to give ninety nine glorious names to Allah to comprehend his manifold functions. These manifold functions of the one God described as ninety nine names of Allah, are his attributes, perhaps, predicated of other deities in polytheistic religions of the tribes of the Arab peoples. A monotheistic understanding of God was essential to bring about unity and tolerant understanding amongst different tribes and communities. But having affirmed the one deity, people were obliged to affirm the different attributes and functions of the tribal gods and thereby include the different understandings and manifestations of the one God.

The different Gods of the Vedas had different functions. So also the different deities of the tribals and outcastes had different functions and together they contributed to the total needs of the human exigencies in their particular local situations. Even the ten incarnations of God (*Dasavathara*) in the popular bhakti religion, is an attempt to include the different gods as the revelations of one God at different times. Through the doctrine of the *Avathara*, an attempt was made to relate the hitherto different Gods, as different manifestations of the one God. It is this inclusive perspective that made for tolerance in the Indian religions and cultural heritage.

Prophet Jeremiah describes Nebuchadnezzar, the worshipper of the Babylonian god, Marduk, as the servant of Yahweh being obedient to Yahweh. Cyrus who claimed that it was his Persian deity who had given him victory, is declared by Deuterio-Isaiah as the anointed one of Yahweh and the shepherd of Israel, sent by Yahweh. The three guests that came to Abraham as Yahweh, reflect the early struggle within the Old Testament, to comprehend this plurality of the deity as one. This was the process through which the different understandings of the Gods of the fathers, were held together by the people of God and the community of believers.

India has a religious heritage of millions of deities but they always believed in the one God who has manifested himself in different ways. Although these different manifestations are separately understood, the *avathara* concept points to an attempt to discern a continuity and inter-relatedness of the different gods and goddesses. This inter-relatedness was accomplished through epics and puranas, thus imparting religious education through a continuity and inter-relatedness of these deities with the supreme deity—the *Brahman*. This has been developed into a philosophical system where these diverse understandings are seen as the result of ignorance and through divine illumination one would realise that there is only one. So even in the *advaita Siddhantha*, there is an indication that it also concedes to multiple manifestations of Iswara—the revealed God. This was Sankara's attempt to build in continuity and include the diverse understanding of God as those of the one ultimate self—the *Brahman*. The different deities of the outcastes and the tribals are God's manifestations to them, in their socio-economic plight down the ages and their religious and cultural heritage reflect their understandings of the Godhead

within their own forsakenness and oppression. Jesus on the side of the oppressed and the outcaste, is continuing this revelation of God through the Gods of our fathers. Jesus came to seek and save that which is lost, the harassed and the exploited is in continuation of the Gods of our fathers who were with our fathers giving hope and strength to them in their degradation. No wonder, it is these outcastes that could follow Jesus as the one who fulfilled their own aspirations and hopes sustained through the religion of the Gods of their fathers. Their religious and cultural heritage, however scant and unexpressed, points to these concerns of their peoples sustained through the centuries. Indeed, the Gospel came to them as the good news fulfilling the hopes and longings of their fathers hidden, unexpressed in the religious and cultural heritage of the gods of their fathers. God the father whom the trinitarian doctrine had expressed as love, was indeed with our fathers revealing himself to them, sustaining them through His revelation through the gods of our fathers. This God of love whom our fathers have met at different places and ages as the gods of our fathers, has finally come out on their side openly, in his gracious revelation through Jesus Christ. This continuity is sustained through the power of the Holy Spirit today. The trinitarian doctrine affirms this God with us guiding, sustaining and leading us in the varied religious and cultural heritage of the nations through the gods of their fathers.

In the New Testament, they saw continuity in the incarnation and the doctrine of the logos. Even when they met Jesus as the incarnated Lord, they had to keep continuity with the Yahweh-god of their fathers, who, in fact had continuity with the gods of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and the Canaanite deities.

It is only in the later period in the New Testament, that the trinitarian formula is used. The earliest Christians were baptised in the name of the Lord Jesus. But later, the disciples are asked to baptize in the trinitarian formula of the Godhead (Mt. 26, 16f). Even in the Trinity, the three persons of the one God are given different, distinct characteristics and functions.

God—Love

Jesus Christ—grace

Holy Spirit—fellowship

These three different understandings of God are brought into one through the doctrine of trinity, bringing about continuity with Yahweh of Israel and looking to the future under the guidance and fellowship of the Holy Spirit. The trinitarian doctrine may be seen as an early attempt of the Christian Church to affirm continuity with the gods of their fathers—including the Greek culture and philosophy which were brought to bear upon the understanding of this Trinitarian deity. The Trinitarian doctrine not only affirms continuity but also makes for an inclusive perspective comprehending diverse deities of different peoples down the millions of years of man's existence upon this earth. This understanding of God affirms the gods of our fathers and the cultures of peoples in different parts of the world, as continued in the faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour.

This perspective would make irrelevant any attempt to affirm the superiority of one religion over others and yet link all religions as the manifestations of the one God revealed in Jesus Christ and thus create an atmosphere of tolerance and understanding the different religions and



cultures which perhaps reflect the different needs of the communities in different parts of the world. The needs of the nomads, settled peoples, outcastes, tribals were different and their gods sustained them through the ages. The doctrine of trinity understood within the context of the Gods of our fathers, comprehends the revelation of God the father, through out all ages, inextricately relates them to Jesus Christ and opens up a new future through the work of the Holy Spirit for all peoples, the not yet known aspect of the Godhead, until the consummation of the world in the Kingdom of God. Thus, the doctrine of trinity forms a clue to appreciate and appropriate all understandings of God as the revelation of the one God revealed to us in Jesus Christ at the appropriate time when the time was fulfilled.

While affirming this continuity, the revelation in Jesus Christ judges all cultural and religious heritages including those of the Christian church. The demonic elements in a culture and religion may be understood as the result of human greed and sin, attributed wrongly to their understanding of God through the revelation of God to their fathers. The trinitarian affirmation acts as the touchstone in testing all our cultural and religious heritages in the light of the Gospel.

Through an inclusive and continuity perspective, the ancient religions renewed and transformed themselves and still kept the cultural and religious ethos of their peoples. The Graco-Roman world held on to its philosophical and popular religious and cultural heritage through the inclusion of the logos theology. Similarly the Indian religious and cultural heritage both written and unwritten, need to be affirmed in appropriating the faith in Jesus Christ within the Indian milieu.

While accepting Jesus Christ, the popular *avathara Siddharta* could be affirmed as the Indian insight into the divine mystery in seeing and perceiving continuity of the one God, within the diverse manifestations as *avatharas*. The *Bhakti* religious and cultural heritage in worship festivals and daily devotions could be continued with great spiritual benefits in the Christian church.

The Trinitarian theology affirming and including the Gods of our fathers would make Jesus part of every religious and cultural heritage and provides a continuity in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ, God makes no nation, including the outcastes without His salvific revelation to them in their own particular context, fully revealed in the revelation of God in Jesus Christ.

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# The Search for Peace

MR. MATHAI ZACHARIAH, NAGPUR

Mankind has many challenges today—to obtain lasting peace, to protect the environment, to conserve the natural resources of the world at a sustainable level, to develop the third world, to control the growth of population etc. But the greatest, and perhaps the most difficult of these challenges is to secure peace.

The theme of this address is *The Search for Peace*. It would have been more true to reality if it were the *struggle* for peace. Search is an academic world; struggle is an existential one. Peace is the key issue of our time.

Peace is the key issue of our time because for the first time since Genesis, man has within his own hands the power to destroy the whole world. Therefore, the main concern of all sensitive people in the world today, as George Kenan has said, is to see that man whose folly once drove him out of the Garden of Eden, does not commit the blasphemous act of destroying, whether, in fear or in anger or in greed, this great and lovely world in which, even in his fallen state, he has been permitted by the grace of God to live. We have passed the point of no return as far as any type of war is concerned, because any war can lead to nuclear war. The toughest job of our time, therefore, is to 'reverse the arms race, so that we could save the human race'.

Some years ago, Sara Carison wrote a very prophetic book entitled *The Silent Spring*. It describes in vivid terms a world without spring. The spring season cannot come because man has killed nature through nuclear holocaust and environmental depletion. Now we know for certain that an endless nuclear winter will envelop our earth if we detonate a large number of nuclear bombs.

So non-violent resistance, satyagraha, pacifism etc. have become true moral and necessary possibilities in our time. To apply these in the corrupt, violent, selfish situations in the world today, in India today, is not an easy task. We shall look at this issue a little later. But here suffice it to say that peace which is a moral imperative has become a practical necessity today, by sheer force of the realities of life today. Wendel Wilkie, who lost election to President Roosevelt during World War II, went around the world and then wrote a book—*One World or No World*. One world of peace and prosperity, or no world at all. In Psalm 144, the Psalmist speaks of such a world of prosperity:

'...I will sing a new song, unto thee O God... with an instrument of ten strings...

...That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; That our daughters may be as corner stones, polished after the similitude of a palace... That our garners may be full... affording all manner of store, That our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets... That our oxen may be strong to

labour... That there may be no breaking-in, nor going out... That there may be no complaining in the streets. Happy, is that people, yes, happy is that people, whose God is the Lord...

We can look at the whole question of man's search for peace today from three angles, from three levels so to say: (1) Personal-Psychological; (2) Biblical-Theological; (3) Political-Military.

## I

When we think of peace, often our first thought is peace of mind, peace in the inner recesses of our heart and mind. This is because peace is a highly subjective experience. Man lives in tumult and anxiety seeking peace. Our age has been called 'an age of anxiety'. Anxiety, psychologists tell us, is the fear of fear. We are afraid to be afraid.

There is no natural peace in man. Within are tumults, without are fears. We know that man's unquiet life is the fruit of his special freedom, and of that inevitable corruption of that freedom by inordinate desire. So Gautama Buddha, and Buddhist philosophy advises man to cut at the root of desire, the source of all evil. Nirvana is the release from desire.

The creatures of nature—beasts and birds, have an internal peace, because they are what they are. They do not have to worry about 'being' and 'becoming', becoming their own selves.

But all creatures, including man, must have peace. All human societies must have peace. Harmony is the natural condition of existence. Our bodies should have their biological harmony—homeostasis, as it is called by biologists. Then man needs harmony of mind and spirit, and for this reason he seeks peace. But what kind of peace is possible for man? How is he to find that peace which does not destroy his essential freedom and rob him of that unique dignity which distinguishes him from brute creation?

## II

The Bible has a great deal to say on the question of peace. If we look at the Old Testament prophets to see whether we can find a collective term for their expectations of the future, we come across the word *shalom*, which means peace. In future, peace will prevail everywhere. Israel will be lifted up over every nation and the obscurities of history will be overcome. In weighty words the prophets speak of how peace will prevail (Micah 4: 3-7; Isaiah 9: 7). Their words sound very calm and soothing like evening prayer with organ music, but can we rely on such calming vision of the future in the world today with starvation, apartheid, Afghanistan, Poland, Star Wars, (SDI), and



a stockpile of 50 thousand nuclear warheads. Are not these visions as cheap as sleeping pills? Does not thus religion become 'the opiate of mankind?' It would actually become so if we understand by peace that which is prompted by our desires and wishes. But the peace of the Bible is something else.

The word for peace in classical Greek is *eirene*, and it is primarily a negative word denoting the absence of war or the end of war. The New Testament has given the word a more positive content. The word *eirene* and its derivatives like *eirenekos* (peace-maker) occur over a hundred times in the New Testament. It is obviously a word to which the New Testament pays great attention. But for the purpose of this address, I am more interested in the Hebrew word *shalom*. *Shalom* originally meant complete, accomplished, saturated. *Shalom* is a comprehensive word, covering the manifold relationships in daily life, expressing the ideal state of life in Israel, and the biblical sense of peace is greatly determined by this positive idea. *Shalom* is not the forced peace of the conqueror, or the peace of the dead, or of the slave who suffers and does not dare to raise his voice, but is a state of eternal bliss. Perhaps this word has the same root as the Sanskrit word *shanti* which depicts the ideal state according to the Hindu view.

Jeremiah outlined the political dimensions of *shalom*. 'And seek the peace of the city wither I have caused you to be carried away captives, and pray unto the Lord for it: for in the peace thereof ye shall have peace' (Jer : 29 : 7). In the Hebrew way of thinking, peace is closely linked with union. One can say that union arises when the relationship of *shalom* is sealed by both parties, as in the story of Joshua's dealing with the Gibeonites. This political explanation gave the prophets a welcome chance to express the relationship of God and the people in the same category. In Ezekiel (34 : 25 ; 37 : 26) we read : 'I will make them a covenant of peace;... it will be an everlasting covenant,... and I will set my sanctuary in the midst of them forever'. This thought was picked up by Apostle Paul and he speaks about the new peace created by the union with Christ (Col. 1 : 19-20 ; Romans 5 : 1).

The Bible gives another insight. When injustice rules there is no peace. Only where repentance has taken place the new path of peace is found (Jer. 29 : 11-14) 'I know what thoughts I have for you, says the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you a future and a hope'. Peace has an eschatological dimension. Peace and Salvation for those returning from captivity in Babylon are only a promise of the future. This eschatological peace in the prophecies is the closing link with the Lord of Peace of whom we hear more in the New Testament (Is. 9 : 6). Peace is thus brought into relation with salvation, and although it does not lose its underlying meaning of prosperity, it is closely conjoined with righteousness and truth. The Suffering Servant brings peace to the nations (Is. 53 : 5).

The New Testament recognises Jesus as the promised Prince of Peace (Mt. 21 : 4-5) and the message of divine peace runs through the whole of the New Testament. At the birth of Jesus the Angels sang 'Peace on earth', and when he appeared to the disciples after resurrection Jesus said to them, 'Peace be with you' (John 20 : 26). In the act of reconciliation (peace-making) he creates a new people of God—a people who will always confess 'He is our peace'. Men and

women become peace-makers only by sharing and living the divine love and forgiveness imparted to them in Christ. 'He makes peace by the blood of His cross' in (Col. 1 : 20).

Although we must clearly distinguish Christ's peace from every kind of human peace, we cannot disregard the value of external peace. When Christ gives his disciples peace he also makes them responsible for peace in the wider sense. How can we, his disciples, through our work and witness promote peace in human society? Since we have been appointed messengers of peace to the world, we should not merely talk about peace; we should really bring it. 'Blessed are the peace-makers, for they shall be called the children of men' (Mt. 5 : 2). How can we bring peace? What is the true path to peace in the world today?

Here again the prophets answer very clearly and without any doubt. 'The fruit of justice shall be peace' (Isaiah 32 : 17). Martin Buber, the Jewish theologian has translated this as, 'the deed of acquittance shall be peace'. Another version reads, 'the work (effect) of righteousness will be peace'. Justice precedes peace. It is an active justice, just deeds, which bring peace. Peace is a social activity by which just conditions will be established, by which those rid of their rights are given them back. Thus it is an action by which relationship willed by God between man and man is renewed. No wonder Theogenis the Greek philosopher said, 'all virtues are subsumed in justice'. Read Isaiah 11 : 2-9. It is an action by which the lost paradise can be made visible. When we know this we can understand why the Psalmist was able to say 'Let Mount Zion rejoice because of thy judgments'.

In the modern world, down through history, in the name of Christ some have tried to reconcile the aggressive with the oppressed, the starving with the affluent. Naturally, most often this was not successful. Lasting reconciliation demands justice. Slightly changing the cry of the American patriot Patrick Henry we can say that the cry of the oppressed is 'give me justice or give me death'.

God's peace on the one hand; on the other peace as the world gives it (Jn. 14 : 27). The distinction is not always clear. The Church is in constant danger of substituting human peace for God's peace. It is all too prone to talk about His peace without wanting to pay the price of obedience. Thomas A. Kempis said : 'All men long for peace, but few desire the things that make for peace'.

The peace of the Christian is the 'peace that passeth human understanding' (Phil. 4 : 7) because God's peace is transferred to us. It is the peace of having, and yet not having the perfection of Christ. This peace will offend the rationalist and the moralist because it does not conform to the simple canons of rationality and morality. But it alone does justice to the infinite complexities of human life. There is no simple calm in it. It is as tumultuous as the surface of the ocean, yet as serene as the ocean's depths which bear the tumult of the surface. The peace of the Christian is like the peace of the Cathedral. The awe-inspiring beauty and majesty of the great domes of a cathedral arise out of great tensions. Power is playing upon power, strength upon strength, pulls up on counter pulls, to keep the dome in place.



Roger Schultz, the Prior of Taizé, in his very interesting book *Violent for Peace* tries to show that Christians must try to hold together Christ's two great words: 'Blessed are the peace-makers' (Mt. 5: 9), and 'Men of violence take the Kingdom of God by force!' (Mt. 11: 12). There is a sense in which Christians must be aggressive for peace. There is often a third alternative somewhere between passivity and violence. Each one (each group) has to discover this alternative for themselves.

Not only was Jesus wishing them peace; he Himself was bringing them peace. When he entered, peace was in their midst. He has given his life in order to break down the middle wall of partition and to create one people. God and peace are inseparable. Only where God is present in his love can peace arise. Peace is fellowship bestowed by God. Let us recall Aaron's blessing: 'The Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace' (Num. 6: 24). The altar built by Gideon, after he had met the Lord, he named Jehovah—Shalom, the Lord is Peace (Judges 6: 23-24). God's presence itself is peace.

Before I end this section of this paper I must mention the three attitudes to war and peace that have appeared time and again in the history of the Church—pacifism, the just war and the crusade. The early Church was pacifist till the time of Constantine. Then, partly as a result of the close association of the Church and the State under Constantine and partly by reason of the threat of barbarian invasions, Christians in the fourth and fifth centuries took over from the classical world the doctrine of just war, whose object should be to vindicate justice and restore peace. The crusade idea rose in the Middle ages, a holy war fought under the auspices of the Church to save the Christian faith. All these three views have reappeared in various configurations in later days.

### III

#### Pre-Requisites for Peace

Edmund Burke, the famous English Parliamentarian and essayist begins one of his well known essay on 'War' with the words 'Wars begin in the minds of men.' So too with peace. At the personal-spiritual level, obtaining peace is comparatively easy. But it is as we pass this level and move into the national and international levels, with all the implications of national interests and power-politics, that peace-making becomes difficult. Here vested interests of big business often link up with the military and economic interests of nations—as it happened in Japan before the II world war—and create impregnable forces of reaction that could forestall any change in the direction of peace. This is perhaps the biggest barrier to peace in the world today. Nations have accepted militarisation at different levels, including the possession of a nuclear-arsenal, as a necessity. Safety is accepted today as the sturdy child of terror. The need for a balance of terror, first strike capacity, deterrence etc. have all produced a failure of response from nations for any peace effort. We all know the terrifying facts of the present situation where mankind is poised on the edge of a precipice. What can we do as human beings and as Christians? No sensible person in the world today can ignore this question.

The irony of it all is that we know the answers: (1) Relinquish sovereignty. (2) Lay down arms. (3) Create a political system for the peaceful settlement of international (and national) disputes etc. But the 'good that I would, I cannot' is the tragedy of our situation.

(a) National sovereignty and the concomitant idea of national security is a major cause for the disquiet in the world today. Instead of the pernicious doctrine of national security, at the international level we must try for *common security* and at the national level for *people's security*. In fact the concept of 'common security' for nations must be reinforced by a concept of 'people's security'. So the battle for peace begins like charity at home, in our local context. True security of people demands respect for human rights as well as social and economic justice—distributive justice.

(b) *Global disarmament*, both nuclear and conventional had been discussed threadbare, ad infinitum ad nauseum, but the movement was in the opposite direction. Disarmament demands a great deal of courage. Socrates has said that courage is a moral attribute, and so in the final analysis the whole question of disarmament in general and of unilateral disarmament in particular, boils down to one of moral courage. And moral courage is not easily available for nations in the face of pervasive threats. Given the present conditions in the world today total disarmament is not a practical possibility. So our effort should be for 'limitations', and 'freeze', as first step.

What would happen if a nation disarms unilaterally. We do not know. Such an unparalleled disarmament might have an amazing effect. Weakness as such has no power; the Jews were helpless, but their helplessness did not soften Hitler. If a nation possessed of strength should voluntarily renounce its advantage, however, the enemy might respond with alacrity and relief. No proof of this can be offered because no nation has ever tried, but there are cases on a more personal level which point to hope. My professor Roland Bainton, the well known Church historian and pacifist activist, has given a story in one of his books. Hans deBoer, a German pacifist, went to Kenya, resolved to talk to the leaders of the Mau Mau. Everyone told him that if he went into the Mau Mau country, he would never come back with his head on. He consulted an American Quaker who had been in the land for some twenty years. The advice was 'Young man' I wouldn't do it if I were you. One should not tempt God.' DeBoer nevertheless went and entirely unarmed. After some two hours of walking, as he was approaching the first settlement, two natives in remnants of European dress accosted him in English, asking 'Are you Mr. DeBoer?' The Quaker friend who had counselled him not to go in fact contacted the Mau Mau. DeBoer was able to have a conference with one of the leaders to whom he deplored alike the violence of the Mau Mau and of the whites, urging instead negotiation. The Negro replied that if the Whites would come unarmed to talk, no blood would flow. The Negroes desired only freedom and the right to own their own land, and they were not lusting to murder the Whites. This incident is significant because a man voluntarily walking unarmed into the next of the Mau Mau so impressed them that they gave him every courtesy. Disarmament and non-violence might revolutionise the worlds' behaviour.



(c) War has always been the ultimate arbiter in human, national and international relations. But the emergence of the weapons of total annihilation calls for urgent *alternate techniques for settlement of disputes*. The League of Nations, The United Nations, The World Court etc. were essentially ineffective first because their decisions were not totally binding on the parties and then because they did not have the necessary power to effect the decisions. Pious admonitions will not make nations beat their swords into ploughshares. Power is the crux of the issue. There is only one form of power that can coerce nations—the united will of the people of the world.

Today there is an emergent pacifism not based on the principles of Christianity, but simply on the desire for survival. We can call this nuclear pacifism. One may not be a pacifist by faith, but in the presence of the nuclear threat one is forced to adopt a pacifist stand, or better a stand of non-violent resistance, of *satyagraha*. In this situation Gandhian thought has acquired a new significance which must be explored. This is why the film 'Gandhi' produced such worldwide interest. As we have seen in the case of our own national struggle for independence, non-violent resistance involves a great capacity for endurance and for moral stamina, which are all too often found lacking in mass movements. We must use all means to strengthen the emergent pacifism and faith in non-violent resistance.

### Ways to Peace

1. *Hope*. The mood today is one of despair. The twentieth century itself is said to be a century of despair. So the urgent need is to turn away from despair to *hope*. The feeling of apathy and fear that often predominate nowadays must be turned into an attitude of commitment, engagement, inventiveness and creativity. We need a moral about turn. Ecumenism itself is hope. Ecumenism, both secular and Christian, is essentially hope in action. Hope that the obscurities of our existence will be clarified and its frustrations overcome. The way to peace begins with hope.

2. *Capture the New Moment*. The 'atom' has created a new 'moment'. The new moment is replete with danger, but it is full of creative possibilities also. The moment gives humanity a chance to shape a peaceful world.

This is an opportunity to choose life and not death. Read Deuteronomy Chapters 29 and 30. Yahweh tells the people of Israel that he has set before them life and death, blessing and cursing and they are asked to choose. And on their choice will depend whether they will make the promised land a place of life or a place of death. 'Therefore choose life.' In our own time, the discovery of the limitless power locked in the atom and its release for life or for death marks such a new moment in our history as was faced by Moses and his people.

3. *Confidence Building*. between political blocks, nations and peoples is generally valued as a specifically Christian and ecumenical task. Especially of young people. It is the Church's special function today to reach across political, cultural, national, ethnic and ideological borders. A new world based upon mutual confidence and justice is our ultimate aim. Confidence

arises out of the absence of fear and anxiety. 'Where there is love there is no fear'. Once confidence is created, bridges of understanding soon come into being.

4. *Education for Peace* is to be a matter of high ranking priority. We must make our people at all levels, especially young people, understand better the issues of war and peace, particularly the moral dimensions.

5. *Waging Peace*. We speak of waging war. Peace too has to be waged, sought for, and procured. All efforts for the elimination of war will be futile without the will to peace. Man in particular has the will-to-power. How to transform the will-to-power into a will-to-love is one of the greatest spiritual-theological problems of modern man. Love belongs to the new day; when other things pass away love endures. The future belongs to love because love is the ultimate reality. God is love. Love is the guarantee that hate, fear and falsehood, all enmity and bitterness are doomed. They are, as a Greek philosopher puts it, steaks of irrationality in the cosmic scheme of things. The life and work of Jesus Christ signifies for all future generations not only that love is the ultimate reality, but that to it belongs victory.

6. *Churches as Peace-Makers*. The Church whenever it was true to its Lord, met the people at the point of their needs and struggles. Peace-making is the supreme need of the day. There is need for a positive conception of peace-making and no other group is better placed than the Church of Jesus Christ to do it. Peace-making is not an optional commitment for the Christians. It is a requirement of our faith (Mt. 5 : 9). Peace-making for us should not arise out of the exigencies of the moment, but from the depths of our heart and soul. It should become a second nature to us, so to say. The content and the context of our peace-making is set, not by some political necessity or ideological compulsion, but by the faith of the Church.

7. *Prayer and Penitence*. The 'nuclear intention' is creation in the reverse and so all of mankind has sinned against God the creator of our lives and the creator of the world. We are responsible for the negation of creation and so stand in need of penitence. We are called today to turn back from this evil of total destruction and turn instead in prayer toward God, toward our neighbour and toward the building of a peaceful world. Only a conversion of our hearts and minds will make it possible for us to encounter Jesus who is our peace and learn from him the way to peace. True prayer is not asking for gifts from God. That is a sub-Christian idea of prayer. In true prayer we try to attune our hearts and minds to God's will for us, for the world. 'Prayer is vacuum of the heart awaiting to be filled' (Barth). 'The practice of contemplative prayer creates a total disarmament of the heart and unfolds an experience of love which is the moving force for peace' (from 'A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace').

8. *Need for an international authority*. In this paper we have mostly talked about temporary solutions, penultimate answers, of 'middle axioms'. But a more all-inclusive final solution is needed. We need a truly effective international authority. Such a structure is not unrealistic because war is no longer viable. The



world today has the technology to make this possible. The genius of humanity aided by the grace and guidance of God, will be able to accomplish it. To create it may take decades of unrelenting effort by the world's best minds and most devoted hearts. 'The journey of a thousand miles begin with the first step' said Lao-tze. Let the effort for a world order begin now, with us. I urge you to join in the efforts of the NCCI and the Churches in India in the creation of the Peace Centre—a place for truly inter-religious peace initiatives. Peace in India has a special meaning—peace between communities. Communalism has been the bane of our society for a long time and eradicating communalism and communal conflicts should be the concern of all people of goodwill in our country.

There is a story about the famous Pragmatist philosopher, John Dewey. He was in his study one day working on some mathematical theory when he started to feel water trickling down his neck. He knew that directly on the floor above him was the bathroom. He rushed upstairs to find the cause of the leak. He found that his eight year old son had filled the bath-tub to overflowing and was sailing paper boats in it. The young boy was trying to turn off the tap. As his father entered the bathroom the boy spoke severely to his father saying, 'Don't scold me, get the mops!' Instead of blaming others for the mess in our world today, let

us get down with clearing it, so that evil is contained and the good is established.

9. *Cosmic Healing* The Bible starts with the story of creation and it ends with the vision of new creation, of a cosmic healing. A cosmic healing is the only answer to man's ills today. The whole creation Paul reminds us is waiting—waiting for the Church to embark on its mission of global sanctification. The ministry of Jesus was one of universal healing. 'Following Jesus in our times' would mean that we are consciously sharing in this healing process. The way ahead is foggy. But let us strive and pray to be visible signs of God's eucharistic (suffering) love in the nuclear age.

Revelation 21 : 1-5.

Our ancient seers expressed their wish for the future of man in a cosmic prayer, in a cosmic wish—'*lokha samastha sukhino bhavantu*' (let the whole world be happy, prosperous). Let us echo that prayer. May you young people strive, search, struggle for a peaceful world, a happy future. 'He who struggles for the future lives in it today.'

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# Review of the Management of Human and the Material Resources of the Church

MR. P. ROBERT GURUSWAMY\*

Departmentalisation of concerns and decimation of duties have unfortunately led to pigeon-holing of functions: the reality of the harmony of over-all perspectives is often lost sight of. The sad tendency has not spared the church. We generally miss the integral unity between spirit and body, preaching and resource-management, church life and church administration. Labelled, rather anathematically as 'finance', management of men and materials is often rated low and the men in charge of it are usually feared to be prone to spiritual bankruptcy. In fact 'finance' is equated with Mammon and the finance officer with Judas. All this may perhaps be the result of the rampant materialism of modern times and of the rather cowardly disengagement of the spiritually minded people from all that is 'material'.

The Biblical understanding of stewardship is far different. It is comprehensive and noble. A steward is a trustee of God whose job it is to manage the master's affairs, care for His receipts and expenditure and give out the proper portion to every member of His flock. His control is more or less absolute when he oversees His master's affairs in his absence. In fact, in Christ's teaching, all of us are God's stewards and our trust covers (a) ourselves, because we belong to him (b) our time, means and opportunities which are granted by Him: and (c) others who are given to us to serve. It is, therefore, the duty of steward to 'manage' charges left to him in trust with most watchful fidelity and utmost efficiency. As this duty pervades the whole life of the church it is required of us, stewards, to be disciplined in body, mind and spirit. This demands care of the body, training of the mind, culture of the emotions and discipline of the will. This in turn requires the most effective utilisation of time, influence, opportunity and money in the wisest possible way. Christian stewardship goes further in helping and urging others to do the same. In short, it is found in one's planning of one's probable life as a whole that it may subserve God's purposes by effectively turning every created thing—be it endowed or given—to God's advantage and glory.

It is such an understanding of stewardship that Christ's teaching does reveal. The labourers in the vineyard are a warning against the human tendency to put material returns above the service rendered on trust. The prodigal son provides warning against wealth being wrongly used. The wicked husbandmen typify breach of trust in the management of the master's estate. The parable of the talents emphasises industry and right and efficient use of opportunity and God-endowed excellence and skills.

It is, therefore, essential for us to widen our perspective of stewardship. Stewardship is not narrowly confined to the augmentation of income and budgeting of expenditure alone. While it may be immediately concerned with these, it is not rooted in them. The roots stewardship are to be found in the acquisition, in present-day church context, of an overall perspective of God's vision for the world and in the urgency of so stewarding as to capture and realize such a vision. This will presumably involve, in terms of operation, the shaping of policies of church government as integral to marshalling of resources. In other words, a truly great financial wizard of the common parlance, with all his sophisticated equipment of financial operation, will be a misfit as a steward within the church if he is not at the same time well informed in the vision and art of church Government. Both these qualifications may still render him useless if he is not also a man of superb integrity and character. That which is important in commerce is only relevant to stewardship. Christian stewardship cannot be divorced from the operation of faith in God and responsible functioning in that faith.

## A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE USE OF THE MATERIAL RESOURCES OF THE CHURCH

Changing patterns of life made their impact on the functioning of the church. In ancient times, people worshipped God in forests and met as groups under trees to open their hearts for spiritual nourishment. When life became sophisticated and work specialized, the church also had to reorganise itself and become formal and businesslike. We may trace the history of finance and other materials back to Moses who spoke to all the community of Israelites.

This is the command of the Lord has given: Each of you set aside a contribution to the Lord. Let all who wish, bring a contribution to the Lord: gold, silver, copper (Exodus 35:4 & 5). The whole community of the Israelites went out from Moses' presence, and everyone who was so minded brought of his own free will a contribution to the Lord for the making of the Tent of Presence and all its service and for the sacred vestments. (Exodus 35:20 & 21)

Moses organised this Finance/Materials (thank offering in cash and kind) campaign for the construction of the sanctuary. Each morning the people brought offerings until the building engineers and supervisors reported to Moses that the offerings had exceeded the requirements, and Moses informed the people of the situation, and asked them not to send any more contributions. A beautiful tabernacle was built to



house the Ark of the Covenant which was overlaid with pure gold inside and out. It is noteworthy that Moses at first made a policy decision and then sought for resources to carry it out. Once the decision was carried through the resources are not grasped for their own sake. The spiritual matches the material and not vice versa.

Perhaps the most dramatic campaign for funds in ancient days (B.C. 1014) was for the construction and dedication of Solomon's temple. Our minds and hearts are touched as we read the report in Chapters 5 and 6 of the First Book of Kings. Materials were gathered from far and near. The most experienced architects and skilful craftsmen were engaged in large numbers. The wealth that was gathered for the entire enterprise astounded foreign rulers. Much more exciting was the Service of Dedication when all the people of Israel gathered with King Solomon before the Ark 'sacrificing sheep and oxen that could not be told nor numbered for multitude' (I King 8 : 5) Solomon preached a sermon and prayed, followed by his presenting a sacrifice of peace offerings of 22,000 oxen and 1,20,000 sheep.

The above reports of 'Thank offerings' indicate the preparation and implementation of 'Master Plans', the strength of organisation and the extent of sacrificial giving. More than the carrying through of the plans the spiritual fervour of the people and the wise marshalling of the resources by the King affirm the totality of the spiritual experience of the nation.

Coming down to the New Testament period, it is clear that Jesus apparently did not have any financial problem as he rendered his services freely to people he did not undertake extensive programmes through organisations, and he did not own or maintain any property. However, his disciples managed their treasury and faced the problem of finance that led to argument at times. Judas was almost de facto treasurer who had resorted to the most indecent and treacherous speculation that led to the greatest tragedy in human history. Some people seem to continue this historical tradition owing to lack of personal commitment and professional competence, owing to pressures of church 'politics' and absence of an adequate management system with built in-controls. They mar the image of the church and its institutions. Perhaps Judas is a warning against the purely materialist's planning for economic development. He betrayed his trust and transgressed the limits of human decency when he perverted community planning into one of personal or selfish aggrandisement.

St. Paul was a campaigner of great reputation. Asking nothing for himself, as he earned his livelihood by a trade, he was not only a great preacher and pastor but he spent much time in organising congregations, raising funds and promoting service programmes. He charged the elders of the Church of Ephesus 'we should keep in mind the words of the Lord Jesus who himself said, 'Happiness lies more in giving than in receiving' (Acts 20 : 35).

Congregations in the early church worshipped witnessed and served the community at large and helped in spreading the message and forming new congregations through systematic giving and sharing and through organisational structures that were relevant and suitable to the socio-economic conditions of the Christian community and also of the community at large.

'Sacrificial giving and not "collection" continued in the Middle Ages especially in Europe and some parts of Asia, towards the construction of cathedrals and chapels. Apart from receiving and spending enormous amounts of money for the purpose of building places of worship men spent their whole life time seeking to perfect the delicate colouring and designing of the stained glass windows, carving the stones, painting panels or constructing exquisite mosaics to adorn walls, ceilings and floors. Many people offered themselves to be harnessed like beasts of burden to transport the material needed for building the church. The people of the Middle Ages gave eagerly of their wealth and their talents for the glory of God. Many of them did not live to see the structures they helped to build Later on 'Giving' became mechanical and ritualistic and this gave room for corruption in the church Giving today, in most places, is no longer person involved—it is a little better than the monthly club subscription.

Reviewing the Missionary Era in India commencing from the arrival of Bartholomew Zigenbalg on 9th July 1706, one cannot miss the sacrificial giving of the missionaries. Many of them offered themselves as willing victims to bad climatic conditions, infectious diseases and violence. And congregations grow rapidly because of their sacrificial giving. With their systematic teaching on stewardship the congregations gave themselves along with their talents, time and energy for the spread of the gospel. Though the congregations depended heavily on the financial support that came from Missionary Societies, the style of operations which was marked by accountability, responsible spending, openness, professional competence and sacrificial giving promoted a sense of satisfaction and credibility among the people. There was a total involvement of the missionary and his congregation in planning for achieving church growth in terms both of spiritual and material concerns. For this reason investment in education and health has registered record returns in terms of subsequent development of leaders and institutions in the country. This encouraged the growth of a meaningful stewardship. Church structures (denominations) were comparatively small: qualified and experienced missionary and Indian workers administered the congregations and institutions with meticulous care, and any mismanagement was detected in time and errant men were severely dealt with. The former Anglicans (SPG and CMS) and Presbyterians (CSM) did pioneering work in building suitable organisational structures especially in the fields of educational enterprise, financial management and evangelism. The Methodists and the Congregationalists rendered specialized services in the major field of Ministry viz., Rural nurture.

With the rich heritage of 241 years of Missionary work, the Church of South India came into being on that great day of 27th September 1947, 'Self Reliance' became the target of this new Church which wanted to express its selfhood in varied aspects of its life and work. The CSI has been successful in this venture. Success was not without problems. Though self-reliant, the CSI had some weaknesses that were more often blown up from within than elsewhere. Centralised administration made for less personal involvement and church politics arose from the type of elections preferred. This came in the way of choosing really committed and competent men and women for positions of responsibility. Inverted priorities in ministering, character assassination and subversive activities are other evils. It is these unfortunate weaknesses that are responsible for the weakening of the witness of the Church.



## A. Giving is not gift but Obligation—Integration of Human and Material resources

Many people have the wrong impression that they make sacrifices for the church while they actually give just enough to keep their self-respect and that 'salvation is free' because 'Jesus has paid for it fully'. The church is not a club asking for subscription for its pastimes nor a polity demanding taxes for its services, but it is the expression of the Body of Christ that calls for worship, witness and service. By the very nature of his life and work by faith, a Christian is obliged to give. He is not giving to an institution but to the Body of Christ expressed through an institutional structure of which he is an integral part and his giving a necessary sustenance. Christ offered himself for people and in turn He is calling people to offer themselves. Every Christian is obliged to give over and above the tithe. There is, at times, a wrong notion that a member is 'giving' to the Presbyter, the Pastorate Committee, the Diocese or Synod. The fact is he is obliged to give to Christ. There can be no Christian giving where it does not involve suffering or sacrifice.

This obligation is an offering in gratitude to God. It is a thank offering. A Church member makes an offering in the church as a token of his offering of himself to God. The label 'Church Subscription' carries with it a secular aura that induces suspicion and corruption. This is responsible for many a misunderstanding about paying for the maintenance of the church as an institution. In the constitution of the Synod/Diocese/Pastorate, it may be provided that those members (not subscribers) who participate in the Lord's Supper regularly, make thank offerings (periodically in case of rural congregation depending on harvests) and take an active part in any of His Ministry, shall have the privilege of choosing are being chosen as Elders (not as pastorate committee members). Let us try to use the biblical language as much as possible—Elders-Local Elders-Area, Elders-Diocesan, Elders-Synod Elders. The phrases such as Pastorate committee mislead people to think in terms of a political organization. Some Committee members are misled to behave like political party members. Ruling party, opposition party, floor crossing, horse trading based on caste, region, sub-region, language, friendship, socio-economic grouping, profession (Govt. servants, teachers, etc). appear to creep into the church. The 'Committee' gives a wrong sense of status, power or recognition in society. We may say that the mere change of name may not be effective but the use of biblical language to a great extent followed by biblical teaching may bring the desired results. The 'Secretarian Churches' were successful in this direction. What is important is not mere change of labels but the realisation

of the overall perspective of stewardship which rises above elections, power politics and personal reputation.

## B. Administration

The composition and structure of Church committees promote hollow and ineffective work (eg.) Pastorate/Diocesan/Synod Committees tend to give more time for administrative, financial and legal matters than for 'people's programmes'. A Pastorate Committee is unable to think of work among the poor, the old, the sick; of the work of evangelism; of encouraging converts and providing support for children's education; of bringing reconciliation among people, and of considering the programmes of the Sunday School, Women's Fellowship, Bible Study, Prayer groups etc. Brief reports of the elders' Meetings may be presented in the Church services for information, reflection and action of the congregation. Since there is no suitable substitute for 'election' the congregation may be asked to choose (instead of the word election) 2/3 the Elders and they in turn may choose (coopt) 1/3 others considering their commitment, professional competence and experience, objectivity and such qualities. Let 50% of Church Elders be 'lay people' who are not employees of the Church and its institutions. The other 50% may be from clergy and full time lay workers of the church and members of Staff of Christian institutions. Otherwise there is a danger of inbreeding resulting in organic disabilities and chronic retardation in the life and work of the church at different levels. There may be a 'Resource Group' consisting of a few Diocesan Treasurers chosen for their personal integrity and professional experiences and of chosen financiers lawyers and professionals in accounting, real estate development and financial administration, those who in addition are of proven trust worthiness and ecclesiastical knowledge who can study the resources, raise new resources examine the programmes and allocate resources accordingly and objectively. This men and women may be called 'Elders for Resources'. They may work in consultation with the Diocesan Treasurers who may meet periodically to review their work. The change of nomenclature is to be considered as a starting point for a new thinking on the part of the members and for a new structure of the Church which integrate the spiritual and material resources.

## Conclusion :

The Good News calls upon people to think, develop and promote the use of all resources for the glory of God and for the welfare of people as individuals and as a community at large. Worship, witness and service are inter-linked, and the resources are used in such a manner that these three aspects of the Ministry of Jesus Christ are fulfilled. He continues to challenge us to be stewards of trust.





# The New Educational Policy and the Church's Priority

MR. J. JAYARAJ\*

The National Christian Council of Churches in India organised a two day consultation at ICSA Madras. Dr. Mithra Augustine the Principal of Madras Christian College played a key role in organising it. Munching over the several arguments, high lights, and issues, I was wondering as to what is going to be the priority of the church after its discussion on the New Educational Policy of the Government of India. Jesus made it clear in His Nazareth manifesto that He came to proclaim good news to the poor. Almost at the close of his earthly ministry He made it plain to his disciples that whatever was done to the least of the brethren would be deemed as something done unto Him. Perhaps that was the prime reason for the Christian missions to open schools in the remote rural areas to battle against the evils of illiteracy. The church's ministry in education has always been effective and distinctive in the Development of Human Resources and Nation building.

We are on the threshold of a new era. If the new generation entering the 21st century finds itself ill equipped, it will hold the present generation responsible for its inadequacies. The Church having been a pioneer now cannot be complacent about its past achievements. She, I believe, has a key role to play at this crucial hour in keeping with the final statement on National Educational Policy which will emerge out of the Nation wide debate on the document 'The challenge of Education—A Policy perspective' which is a brilliant analysis of the past and present system of education. As education is essentially concerned with the future, every one has a responsibility to make his own contribution to make it holistic.

There is distinction between education and educational system and the document speaks only about the system of education. The present system is rigid, unrelated to life and examination oriented. It does not foster creativity but stereo-types. It encourages only rote memory but does not develop reasoning and skills. Education has almost become a prescribed pill. The curriculum, the text book the hours of work, the allotment of periods the strength of the staff have all been prescribed. While education is independent, the system

has become dependent. The present system of education introduced by Lord Macaulay to produce clerks for the British Raj stayed on with us for too long a period. We, in the modern world are prepared to send away our dear old parents and grand parents who are living monuments of love and sacrifice to the Home for the Aged, although in their old age they need our loving care. But we do not want to uproot the old and plant a new system, which would usher in the desired social changes. The 21st century will be far advanced scientifically and technologically. A system that should cater to the needs of the next century has become imperative. The success of any system however good it may be, largely depends on those who implement it. 'Efficiency and Quality' will have to be the watch word of the system. Then the new system certainly needs change agents who have a sense of call and commitment to the cause of education.

The church which has been called 'Not to be ministered unto but to minister' could give serious thought to some aspects of the new system and make positive responses.

## Teacher Education:

At present teachers are trained to impart formal education at the elementary and secondary level but they are not trained for Non-formal, adult, informal, mass, remedial or vocational education. If general education should be made available to more people it would mean additional facilities and increase in the number of teachers. Finance will be major constraint.

To develop scientific temper the methodology of pedagogy should change. We need to train the minds of our wards to question 'why?' and struggle to find answers for their questions. For developing a spirit of scientific enquiry we do not need learned teachers but actively learning facilitators. The rural schools do not have even black boards. How are we going to help our village children to actively participate in the process of learning which is autonomous? If our methodologies should change our infra-structure should also change.

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Libraries and Laboratories become basic needs. We can have open air classes but can we have open air libraries and laboratories and Administrative sections to preserve vital school records and documents. Don't we need at least some buildings worth its name to store the aids for learning? Some of our dear friends both in the country and overseas seem to have mental blocks about buildings. Perhaps they do not consider establishing a library or a laboratory a project or programme. With the explosion of knowledge the mass media has to become powerful channels of information. Only then the teacher could effectively play his role as facilitator. The ancient India had Gurus and Sishyas and Gurukulas. The Guru, the Acharya was the only source of knowledge and skills. Education has now become child centred and the managers of schools must have a sense of responsibility to provide facilities for learning. Having provided the much needed facilities they should hold the teachers accountable. What is more important on the part of the teachers is a sense of devotion to duty and commitment to the cause of education.

#### Adult Education :

Dr. Malcolm Adhiseshia compared our educational system to a broken bucket. 80% of the Indian population is rural. Nearly 65% happen to be landless agricultural labourers. Of the children who are enrolled at the age of 6 in class 1, 80% drop out before they reach Std. VIII. This happens inspite of the free noon meal, free supply of books note books and uniforms. Nearly 56% who drop out before reaching Standard V relapse into illiteracy. India is a land of contrasts—a land of the awfully rich and the miserably poor, a land of intellectuals and illiterates. Several Educational commissions recommended remedial measures but the situation remains mostly the same. The children of the agricultural labourers drop out because of necessity. They have to earn in order to survive although Jesus promised them abundant life. The education offered was also 'useless', and 64% of the Indian population live in blissful ignorance of illiteracy. Can the church strain its nerves to work out strategies for programmes of functional literacy for the drop outs. Recent experiments in Asian countries have proved that an adult can be made literate in 6 months time. Where there is will there is a way.

#### Vocational Education:

When it was introduced in Higher Secondary School the educational planners expected it to be terminal. Contrary to their expectation, only those who were considered to be misfits for academic stream opted for vocational education. After plus two they were neither fit for employment nor where they allowed for vertical mobility. To make matters worse part-time vocational teachers on an allowance of Rs. 300/- per month were allowed to be appointed. The posts remain vacant for months and years. The main thrust of it was exposure to the world of work. Mahatma Gandhi advocated work oriented craft centred basic Education in order to develop productive individuals who would have dignity for labour. Through cottage industries he dreamt of a society that would believe in rural reconstruction and self-employment. But for some reason or other Basic Education did not become popular.

Contrary to the expectation that vocational education would minimise rush for admission into colleges,

enormous pressure has been exerted on colleges for admission. The science and arts colleges which do not offer career oriented courses are, in the words of Bishop Sundar Clark, 'Useless Degree producing machinery'. It is time we give serious thought to vocational education. Can we find funds to appoint full-time competent vocational teachers to impart meaningful vocational education. A thorough knowledge of the environs and its needs is a prerequisite before deciding on the vocational subject. For example in a locality where there are hundreds of printing presses, printing technology would be an ideal option and not electrical rewinding or black smithy.

#### Women's Education:

In Rajasthan the literacy rate of women is as low as 17%. In spite of efforts taken by the state and service agencies illiteracy among women is very high. Even wealthy parents stop their daughters from going to school after they attain puberty, train them to be good home makers, and decently get them married for fear of the society becoming permissive. The forgotten factors are the love and sacrifice of the mother that make any home a paradise. It is also true that our own mothers and sisters are exploited. Their services go unnoticed and in a male dominated society what is due to them is denied. God gave Eve to Adam to be his life partner and not to slave for him. A recent news item speaks volumes of the position of women in Indian Society. Out of 5000 pregnant mothers 4999 got rid of the lives growing in their wombs when they came to know that they were going to nurture female children in their wombs. There is discrimination even in the matter of career education. Our educational system should give opportunities for women to develop to the full stature of womanhood.

#### Education for National Integration:

Some one said that in India 790 million people live but not 790 million citizens. What is most lacking is a spirit of Nationalism and Patriotism. We must train our youthful charges to grow into Nation loving, responsible citizens. Dr. Radhakrishnan observed that one of the most striking things in India is 'unity in the midst of diversity'. We will have to transcend all barriers of caste, creed and clan and learn to live as one united family. The theory of the sons of soil will toll death knell to National integration. Children must be trained for responsible citizenship through NCC, NSS, Scouts and Guides movements.

#### Financing:

Upto Secondary Education, it must be free and universal. Higher education must be subsidised. But those who are wealthy should pay the full cost of education. Aptitude tests may be administered and candidates enrolled into colleges. Admission must be based on merit, of course following the reservation quota for the weaker sections. Most of the professionals must be made to pay the full cost of education as most of them either set up their own private practices or leave the country for greener pastures. It does not mean that professional education should be denied to weaker sections. Service agencies could give financial assistance. Liberal scholarships could be granted. Loan facilities through Banks could be organised. The professionals must offer their skills for Nation building. 'A gentleman is one who gives to the society more than



what he receives from it.' The country needs more professionals who are 'Gentlemen'.

### **Establishment of Model Schools:**

The country must certainly develop the precious Human Resources. The most talented must be given all opportunities for development of potentials. Among the existing schools one in each district may be selected and assisted to grow into a model school. In course of time each school, could through its own efforts develop into a model school specialising in socially relevant disciplines, with the assistance of the state and the community it serves. Our effort should be to help all schools to offer quality education. What our children need now is schools but not model schools,

### **Main Focus on Elementary School Education:**

In the year 1950 when we gave ourselves a constitution. The Founding Fathers of the Democratic Republic of India through Article 45 pledged that the the government would provide free, compulsory and universal elementary education within a period of 10 years. In 1950 the literates were only 16% as against 36% in 1985. 35 years have gone by and there are still 64% illiterates. In 1950 of the total expenditure on education 56% was apportioned for elementary education as against 36% in 1985, inspite of its vast quantitative expansion. The number of schools in 1985 is 56000 as against 4000 in 1950. Although 80% live in rural India the centres of Higher learning are located in the cities only. It is time that there is a moratorium on opening new schools and colleges and professional institutes in the cities.

The illiterates are mostly agricultural labourers. Their ignorance is exploited by a few who control the economy of the Nation. Because they also control the political apparatus they determine the destiny of the vast majority. What can be the reason for the glaring disparities between the sophisticated city schools and the single teacher rural schools. By 1990 India expects 100% enrolment of primary school children. This would mean more financial allocation for primary education. The budgetted amount seems to be Rs. 6000 crores but the government would require Rs. 45,000 crores according to economists and educationists. How are we going to mobilise resources and how much is going to be spent on primary education? Elementary education is as vital as food. It serves as the foundation of the personality, attitude, habits, communication skills etc. It strengthens the fabric of democracy. Pre-school education will only re-inforce elementary education.

The church is known for its leaning towards the middle class but professing to serve the weaker section. It is evident in its running institutions of educational excellence ignoring the needs of the weaker sections and the marginalised. Will these institutions open their doors to help bright children and admit them in as free scholars equipping them for the challenges of development? One of the questions very often asked is whether the church schools really serve the under dog.

Now comes the crucial question as to what our priority is. For sure, interests are the determinants of priorities. Conflicting interests culminate in conflicts in the setting up of our priorities. What is going to be our priority? Higher Education? Elementary Education? or Professional Education?

If the church is interested in proclaiming goodnews to the poor through her educational institutions and if she is convinced that illiteracy is an evil to be eradicated then she should be lobbying for and concentrating on the most neglected elementary education in the rural India. Then alone she will have the moral fibre to make even mention about Social Justice.

If we could be partners with the National Government in Universalising primary education at least by 2000 AD, then we can truly rejoice that the pledge of our predecessors, whose promise was distant dream has become a reality. Let us hope that we will live to see the dawn of that great day of liberation from ignorance.

### **Computer Education ?**

When electricity was discovered in the last century no one would have realised its present immense use. When the first generation of computers were put to use in 1940 no one would have expected a world of change so soon. 'To-morrow's World does not belong to those with the most money, machine or man power'.

As educators we need to recognise the importance of computer education just as any other discipline like Arts and Fine Arts at this crucial period of educational revolution. India has already missed the bus when there was industrial Revolution in Europe and we cant afford to miss it again when there is Computer Revolution. We are on the threshold of new discoveries and new worlds previously beyond man's comprehension. In the final analysis man is shaped by his own tools. They make man's life convenient and comfortable and we must be honest to admit that we seek a certain amount of convenience and comfort. It may be true that in the long run computers will create more problems than what they can possibly solve but are they capable of creating more problems than the descendants of Adam.!

Whether we like it or not the Indian society has already been computerised. The upper class has already had the benefit of this sophisticated system of education and the entry of the under privileged into its many fields of human endeavour which will inevitably become dependent on computers, is almost blocked. As a church do we have a responsibility to make this socially relevant education available to the underdog? Computer is a gift of God just as any other gift such as Radio, Television, Car, etc. It is left to man to use it abuse it or misuse it.

St. Pauls Higher Secondary School Madras although a state aided school in the midst of slums has gone in for a fourth generation computer to train the Weaker section for employment. In a corrupt and competitive society will there not be at least a handful who would accept the employable have nots. There is still a remnant of noble souls.



# Making June 16th a Day of Spiritual Combat Against the Heresy of Apartheid

Sharpeville 1960, 69 killed—Soweto 1976, over 500 killed (all children)—Langa (Uitenhage) 1985, 19 killed. (These are the 'official' statistics and therefore an underestimate.) This must stop! Apartheid must be dismantled! The blacks of South Africa must have their basic rights restored to them!

On June 16th this year, Christians throughout the world will be urging these steps by prayer and fasting. Documentation and posters are being sent to the churches by the World Council of Churches (WCC) in preparation for this day.

For June 16th has been declared a day of prayer and fasting throughout the world for South Africa. This decision was taken by the Executive Committee of the WCC when it met in Kinshasa from March 9th to 15th this year. In doing so, it adopted the proposal made by the 'summit' church conference held in Harare (Zimbabwe) from December 4th to 6th 1985 when the idea of making this day a World Day of Prayer and Fasting 'to end unjust rule in South Africa' was first launched.

The hundred church leaders of South Africa, Western Europe, North America, Australia, and from other regions of Africa, meeting in Harare, had boldly affirmed: 'The moment of truth (*kairos*) is now, both for South Africa and for the world community.' 'In this moment of immense potentiality, we agree that the apartheid structure is against God's will and morally indefensible... The South African government has no credibility... We understand and fully support those in South Africa who are calling for the resignation of the government.'

The proposal to make June 16th 1986 a World Day of Prayer and Fasting was accompanied by a set of recommendations to the Churches and Christians inviting them to urge the nations of the world to prevent

the extension or renewal of bank loans to the white white régime, to apply immediate and comprehensive sanctions to South Africa and to support South African movements working for the liberation of their country.

Along the same lines, three leading South African churchmen—Desmond Tutu, Anglican Bishop of Johannesburg, Beyers Naudé, General Secretary of the South African Council of Churches, and Allan Boesak, President of the World Alliance of Reformed Churches—have recommended 'Northern' banks not to agree to the rescheduling of South Africa's debts to them. The three leaders declared: 'Dominated as the government is by representatives of the white minority, it should be required to resign as a prior condition for the rescheduling of these debts.'

The Harare church summit meeting also called for the liberation of Nelson Mandela and all political prisoners, and demanded the immediate implementation of the United Nations Resolution 435 on the independence of Namibia providing for free elections to be held in that country. In its 'Message to Member Churches', the WCC Executive Committee adopted all these recommendations of the 'Harare Declaration' and also included an invitation to the international rally of young people to be held at the beginning of June.

To help in the practical arrangements for the World Day of Prayer and Fasting on June 16th 1986, the WCC is despatching to all its member churches a poster, the text of a special prayer, an order of service, and documentation. Requests for these may also be addressed to the WCC's Communication Department.

(Translated from the French—WCC Language Service, Geneva 4/4/86.)



# NEWS FROM THE DIOCESES

## COIMBATORE DIOCESE

Welcome to the International Year of Peace and at the same time the Youth of Coimbatore Diocese did not say good bye to International Year of the Youth! Because the International Year of the Youth generated a lot of enthusiasm and zeal among the youths of our Diocese and it will continue in the years to come. In fact the IYY has enthused the Youth to take up some projects for the benefit of humanity and Church. Commemorating the IYY the youths have performed some remarkable services. Here are some of them.

1. Youths donated blood through Red Cross Society.
2. Some important vessels were donated to the hostels in the diocese.
3. Some Rural Churches have been given Petro-max, lights.
4. Cloths were distributed to the slum dwellers.
5. The Youths donation reached the poor people in thatching the roof of their huts.
6. They raised some fund through musical programmes and gave it for the Church projects like extension of Church building and construction of Parish Hall etc.
7. Church Library movement has been launched on in some Churches.

In order to keep IYY evergreen the Diocese has decided to build one hostel for College girls at the

cost of three lakhs. The Diocese has started one marriage bureau. The Diocese introduced nine types of competitions to unearth the hidden talent in the youth.

Recently our Diocese had the privilege of receiving a group of young people from U.R.C. England. They were with us for about five days.

REV. S. C. JAYAKUMARI  
Diocesan Youth Director  
Convener for Youth Work

## NANDYAL DIOCESE

The visit of the Most Revd. Dr. Runcie the Archbishop of Canturbury, to Medak on the 25th of February was a great occasion not only to the diocese of Medak but also to Nandyal diocese. As many as 300 from the Nandyal diocese were present in the cathedral at Medak to greet the Archbishop. The trip to medak was made possible by the kind consideration of the bishop of Nandyal, Rt. Rev. B. R. Devapriam who met the cost of travel for all the clergy and the diocesan officers and their families as a Christmas gift. Indeed it was a joyous occasion when we met the Archbishop and spent a memorable moments with him.

A. S. DEVADANAM  
Hon. Secretary

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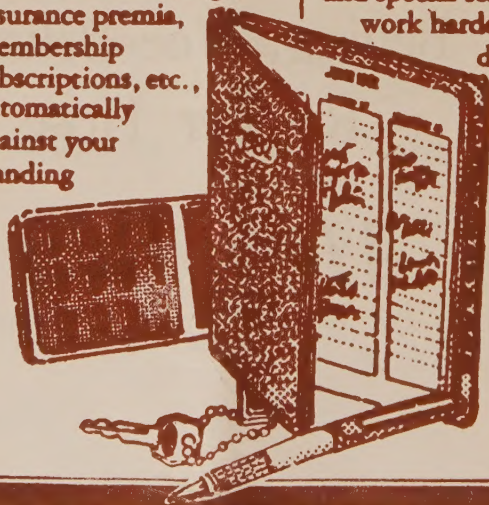
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